

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 01078 201817Z

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9952

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

S E C R E T BRUSSELS 1078

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, EEC

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE IMPACT ON
EUROPE

REF: STATE 32337, BRUSSELS 1039 AND 1010

1. THE NINE WERE FAR FROM UNITED BEFORE THEY WENT TO
THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE. TODAY THEY ARE NO MORE
DISUNITED THAN THEY WERE IN THE FIRST PLACE BUT
EVERYONE IS NOW MORE AWARE OF IT. THEY HAD FALLEN
OUT BEFORE SPECTACULARLY ON AGRICULTURAL PRICES
AND REGOINAL SUBSIDIES. FRENCH OPPOSITION IN

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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 01078 201817Z

WASHINGTON WAS THE SAME MIXTURE AS BEFORE. SINCE
THE PATH OF THE NINE TO QTE UNITY UNQTE IS ALREADY

STREWN WITH COMPROMISES, THERE IS NO REASON TO ASSUME THAT THEY WILL NOT FIND ANOTHER COMPROMISE THAT WILL PRESERVE FRENCH MEMBERSHIP.

2. THERE IS NO EUROPEAN SENTIMENT FOR FORCING A SHOWDOWN WITH FRANCE OR QTE PUTTING HER IN A CORNER UNQTE PERMANENTLY. EUROPE HAS NOT FOUND HER IDENTITY-- EXCEPT AS A FAIRIFF UNION, THIS BEING THE LOWEST, THE MOST OPPORTUNIST COMMON DENOMINATOR OF COMMUNAL EFFORT; BUT EUROPE IS GOING TO KEEP TRYING. ECONOMICALLY, THE EC HAS GIVEN ABOUT ALL IT HAD TO GIVE; POLITICALLY, IT HAS HARDLY BEGUN TO EMERGE AS AN EFFECTIVE ENTITY.

3. AS FAR AS WE CAN SEE, OPEN CRITICISM OF THE FRENCH GAME, PUBLICLY AND FORCEFULLY STATED, HAS COME FROM VAN ELSLANDE, THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF BELGIUM, WHILE MOST OF HIS COLLEAGUES HAVE CONTENTED THEMSELVES WITH TAKING EXCEPTION IN PRIVATE TO FRENCH MISBEHAVIOR. FOR THIS VAN ELSLANDE DESERVES HIGH MARKS (BRUSSELS 1010).

4. AS IT IS, DESPITE VAN ELSLANDE, THE NINE ARE LIKELY, AS THEY HAVE DONE BEFORE, TO SWEEP THE LATEST CASE OF COMMUNAL DISSENSION UNDER THE EC RUG. FEW EC MEMBERS ARE LIKELY TO TAKE ISSUE, FOR FRANCE IS NOT THE ONLY EC MEMBER TO HAVE SOUGHT A QTE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP UNQTE WITH THE PRODUCERS. THUS, SEVERAL EC POTS HAVE A POOR CASE FOR CALLING THE FRENCH KETTLE BLACK. MOREOVER, THE EUROPEANS DO NOT PREFER FOR REASONS EMBADDED IN HISTORY AND SENTIMENT, TO SUBSTITUTE A BONN-WASHINGTON AXIS (BONN 02672) FOR INEFFECTIVE PARIS TUTELAGE. (FOR OUR OWN PART, WE MIGHT DO WELL TO AVOID GIVING THE APPEARANCE OF OPTING FOR SUCH AN ALTERNATIVE.)

5. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE EIGHT WILL NOT GO ALONG WITH OUR ENERGY PROPOSALS--AS LONG AS THE COOPERATION BETWEEN CONSUMERS IS EXPEDITOUSLY TRANSFERRED, AT LEAST IN PART AND VISIBLY, TO EXISTING

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BRUSSE 01078 201817Z

INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS.

6. WHILE THE PROBLEMS OF THE ENERGY CRISIS ARE BEING TACKLED, THE NINE WILL RETURN TO THEIR STRUGGLES OVER THE UNSOLVED PROBLEMS OF EUROPEAN UNITY. A REAL THREAT TO EUROPEAN UNITY IS THE GROWING DIVISIVENESS OF EUROPE'S NATIONAL POLITICS, VIDE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE ENGLISH ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN.

7. CERTAINLY THE BELGAINS, AND IT SEEMS TO US ALL OF

THE OTHER EC GOVERNMENTS, CONTINUE TO CONSIDER SOME FORM OF CLOSER INTEGRATION THEIR DECLARED OBJECTIVE. WE SEE NO INDICATION OF A READINESS TO WITHDRAW FROM THAT PROCESS.

8. IT WAS, WE THINK, CONCERN WITH THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATO ALLIANCE, JOINED TO THE LOGIC AND GENEROSITY OF OUR ENERGY PROPOSAL, THAT PRESUADED THE EUROPEANS TO SHAKE LOOSE FROM GAULLIST PRETENSIONS AND, IN WASHINGTON, TO FOLLOW OUR LEAD. IN THE LAST RESORT, THIS CONCERN WHEN JOINED TO THE RIGHTNESS F OUR POLICIES, WILL ALWAYS BE OUR STRONGEST LEVER ON EUROPEAN CONDUCT. STRAUSSZ-HUPE

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